

Venue:
Community

Goal:
Eliminate Exposure to
Secondhand Smoke

Activity:
C4.03 Policy Education-
Public Venues and Worksites



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- **Population (Census 2000): 700,820**
- **Total Households (Census 2000): 260,800**
- **Adult Cigarette Smoking Prevalence (BRFSS/ATS 2003): 26 percent**
- **Estimated Number of Adult Cigarette Smokers (DOH 2004): 132,100**
- **Number of Students: 130,070**
- **Eighth Grade Cigarette Smoking Prevalence (HYS 2002): 9 percent**

Pierce County Comprehensive Clean Indoor Air Resolution

Project Description

Responding to a proposal from the Director of Health, Dr. Federico Cruz, the Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health unanimously passed a resolution that prohibits smoking in all indoor public places and places of employment throughout Pierce County.



Inputs Rationale

- Implementing an indoor smoking resolution provided a rare policy opportunity to decrease secondhand smoke exposure among workers, increase cessation rates among current smokers, strengthen community norms against tobacco use in the larger community, and support other county and statewide efforts to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke.
- The Tacoma–Pierce County Health Department made implementation of a complete indoor smoking ban in Pierce County a priority. This move was backed by national recommendations from Healthy People 2010, the Community Guide to Preventive Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which states, "Smoking bans and restriction are strongly recommended on the basis of strong scientific evidence that they reduce exposure to ETS, decrease daily consumption of cigarettes by workers subject to the ban, and may increase tobacco cessation and/or reduce tobacco use prevalence".¹
- The Tacoma–Pierce County Health Department researched the existing burden of death and disease caused by exposure to secondhand smoke and the positive health impacts of a ban on the health of Pierce County workers, especially those in the hospitality industry.
- The health department also considered the county's current readiness for implementing a ban, including surveys demonstrating that:
 - 64 percent of restaurants, taverns, and lounges were voluntarily smoke-free by the end of 2002.
 - 98 percent of adults recognized the serious harm of secondhand smoke.
 - 65 percent support a Health Department resolution prohibiting smoking in restaurants, bars, bowling alleys, and other public places.

¹ Community Guide to Preventative Services, Tobacco Use & Exposure, www.thecommunityguide.org

Target Audiences

- Primary: Washington State Courts
- Secondary: Tacoma-Pierce Board of Health, hospitality industry, Washington State Legislature, and other counties
- Tertiary: Supportive non-smokers

Resources

Staff

- Manager, health department legal counsel, prevention coordinator, program coordinator, marketing and communications specialist, two prevention specialists, population-based nurse, health educator, support staff. The Secondhand Smoke Team dedicated to this project began meeting weekly for 2-3 hours in May 2003. In addition, all team members spent extensive time on specific tasks and activities.

Funding

- Health Pool funds and tobacco settlements funds

Partnerships

- Members of Pierce County Tobacco Advisory Board, Department of Health, Secondhand Smoke Community Assessment Project, community service agencies, health care organizations, businesses, students, and concerned residents.
- The Department of Health provided information and allowed the use of the Secondhand Smoke Community Assessment Project resources, primarily in communications and media training.
- Tobacco Advisory Board members assisted with testimony before the Board, submitted letters to the editor, and communicated with the audiences served by their organizations.

Activities

1. Working with an attorney, the Tacoma–Pierce County Health Department identified legal strategies for challenging perceived preemption. A Secondhand Smoke Team was formed with the explicit objective of passing and sustaining a comprehensive smoke-free resolution. The team developed materials and processes to increase the likelihood of adoption by the Board, encourage community support, and resist efforts by opponents to undermine the resolution.
2. Many staff members from all levels of the department were involved, as well as community partners and state and national agencies, creating a unique alignment of objectives, strategies, and resources.
3. A wide mix of tools were used to obtain community and Board support including; news media communications, community partnerships, policy development, researching and synthesizing the secondhand smoke literature, and developing and distributing suitable materials and procedures.

Evaluation

The project is not over yet, though, if the resolution is upheld for long enough (a year or more), we should be able to demonstrate effects in a number of arenas. We will track how quickly and completely businesses comply with the new resolution. We will be able to share with others how difficult implementation and enforcement is. We will collect economic data to assess impacts on businesses. We will use surveys to track changes in public support for smoke-free policies. We also expect that calls to the quit line may increase, that the frequency and duration of serious quit attempts may increase, and that the awareness of local tobacco prevention activities and other measures will change as a partial result of this resolution.

Pierce County estimates of health impacts of secondhand smoke exposure:

Heart disease mortality attributable to secondhand smoke exposure in non-smokers	
Total heart disease deaths	1,439
Deaths attributable to secondhand smoke	21
Total Costs in 2002	\$845,508

¹ ICD-10 codes for heart disease: I00-I09, I11, I13, I20-I51

² Numbers of cases are rounded to the nearest case, costs to the nearest dollar

³ Costs based on \$40,236 per case, and exclude immediate deaths (14.1%)

Annual new cases of asthma in children 5 and under, attributable to secondhand smoke exposure	
Children under 5 exposed to secondhand smoke	6,088
Total new cases of asthma	671
Asthma cases attributable to secondhand smoke	71
Total Costs in 2002	\$864,492

¹ Numbers of cases are rounded to the nearest case, however costs are not

² Costs based on \$142 cost per exposed child

Outputs

1. The Secondhand Smoke Team developed a strategic plan, objectives, benchmarks, and timelines for the resolution process.
2. The team presented information about the resolution in newspaper ads, on the health department's Web site, and at public forums. It also created fact sheets discussing enforcement of the ban and the effects on businesses.
3. The fact sheets, resolution, press releases, and registry of new smoke-free bars, restaurants, and taverns in Pierce County are available at www.preventionpriority.org
4. The Board of Health passed the resolution on December 3, 2003 and it was in effect for three weeks before an injunction stopped it in late January. An appeals court overturned the injunction, reinstating the resolution on February 25, 2004. The Tacoma–Pierce County Health Department's food inspectors are once again notifying affected businesses that the resolution is in force and that non-compliant businesses risk fines and loss of their licenses to operate. Newspaper ads, television public service announcements, billboard ads, and direct mail are being used to communicate to businesses and the public that Pierce County is smoke-free. Health Department staff is answering additional questions from businesses and the public daily.

Lessons Learned

- This is a complex project for any community with many unknowns and the importance of a coordinated, multi-faceted team approach cannot be overestimated. Frequent meetings and tight communications, a defined yet flexible approach, supportive leadership, and committed participants are all essential elements of a successful campaign.
- Some boards of health may benefit from a study session in between regular meetings to have more time for questions and to absorb the substantial secondhand smoke literature. Our Board has been well versed on tobacco issues since 1998 and also had been provided with an extensive summary of the secondhand smoke literature before considering the resolution.
- Having one person, who could reinforce the main campaign messages, readily available to the media, helped frame stories and helped keep our communications with the media and the public consistent.
- You can say clean air, smoke-free, and resolution 'till the cows come home but unless your local media is supportive, it will show up in the newspapers and on television as a ban and, historically, the public responds less favorably to that word.
- While there are many facts about secondhand smoke, resist the temptation to use them all. Some tempting messages, such as secondhand smoke harms children, have been used by opponents to undermine smoke-free resolutions. Our focus continues to be the serious and unfair harm that occurs to workers.